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Andrew Burke

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ANDREW BURKE

Grave Poem

I hardly ever think about it. My remaining brothers and sister, we all hardly ever think about it. Our father's grave could be wild as a vacant lot on the edge of the city for all we know. We don't tend it. Wild, I run out into the dark after midnight, in fright, run out into the dark rain falling slantwise under a streetlight that would be a moon. Father's grave has grown tall thistles and the ugliest of weeds that even the cemetery snails don't nibble. My father used to laugh at the cemetery ducks, kept there to keep the snails down to plague proportions. No need on Father's lot. They waddle and shit as they pass. I am standing now in wet streetlight, the real world coming back to me. I stare out across the suburbs. Today, Father's lot is carefully groomed and pruned by a team of gardeners. Are they our gardener's grandchildren, learning their craft on such domino rectangles of death's wilderness? This is as it was planned and prepaid. As when we lived together, Mister Hobby the grey stubble bearded old man who wandered our gardens, pulling the dead out of the ground and planting new plants.